

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for permanently deforming a flexible film material, in which the film material is deformed, comprising the steps of:
 - providing a positive and negative mould each having a ~~lower edge~~lateral side portion and a central upper portion;
 - forming a single receptacle depression in the film material between the moulds;
 - controlling and reducing the tension of the film material while it is being moulded[[:]]
 - ~~wherein allowing additional film material is allowed to~~
penetrate between the positive and negative moulds in
~~order to~~ amounts sufficient to form lateral creases in the
film material around the entire ~~lower edge~~ lateral side
portion of the moulds while the film material in the central
upper portion of the moulds retains its original shape
during the deforming procedure.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled by applying a controlled retaining force to peripheral regions of the film material.
4. (Previously presented) The method as claimed Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled by moving peripheral regions of the film material towards one another in a controlled manner.
5. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the peripheral regions are moved a specific distance towards one another.

6. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the peripheral regions are moved parallel to one another or towards one another in radial directions.
7. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled in such a manner that, in the region of the receptacle depression, a substantially crease-free central region is formed and a region along the entire ~~lower edge~~lateral side portion[[s]] is formed with controlled lateral creases.
8. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is brought to a controlled temperature before or during the deforming process, which makes permanent deformation of the film material possible.
9. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the temperature is raised or lowered during the deforming process.
10. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is partially or completely printed before the deforming process.
11. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the film material is printed with distortion-sensitive contents, such as writing, logos or trade marks in a region which is only slightly distorted during the deforming process.
12. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the film material is printed with an undistorted printed image.

13. (Cancelled)
14. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the positive or the negative mould is unheated.
15. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the positive or the negative mould are heated and brought to a predetermined temperature.
16. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the positive or the negative mould are subjected to a partial vacuum.
17. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is heated and deformed during a deformation time between the positive and a negative mould, the tension in the film material being relieved in a controlled manner during the deformation time or after a recovery time after the end of the deformation time.
18. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the recovery time can be up to several seconds long.
19. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the flexible film material is delivered to a deforming station in cycles, such that a number of receptacle depressions are formed simultaneously with each stroke of the cycle, with margins of the web being kept under controlled tension
20. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 19, wherein the film material is delivered in the form of a continuous web or in the form of individual blanks.

21. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a product packed in flexible film material, especially a food product, comprising the steps of:
- providing a positive and negative mould each having a ~~lower edge~~lateral side portion and a central upper portion;
 - forming a single receptacle depression in the film material between the moulds;
 - controlling and reducing the tension of the film material while it is being moulded[[:]]
 - ~~wherein allowing~~ additional film material ~~is allowed to~~ penetrate between the positive and negative moulds in order to amounts sufficient to form lateral creases in the film material around the entire ~~lower edge~~lateral side portion of the moulds while the film material in the central upper portion of the moulds retains its original shape during the deforming procedure; and
 - placing a product to be packed in the receptacle depression.
22. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the food product is introduced into the receptacle depression in a free-flowing state.
23. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the receptacle depression along the lower ~~edge~~lateral side portion is sealed, especially with a sealing film.
24. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 23, wherein a peripheral sealing rim or seam is formed, especially by bonding or ultrasonic welding.
25. (Currently amended) A device for permanently deforming a flexible film material, the device comprising:

a positive and negative mould each having a ~~lower~~
~~edge~~lateral side portion and a central upper portion and a
means for holding peripheral regions of the film material
on the positive or negative mould;

wherein tension on the film material is controlled and
reduced while it is being moulded, ~~whereby allowing~~
additional film material ~~is allowed~~ to penetrate between the
positive and negative mould in ~~order~~ amounts sufficient to
form controlled lateral creases in the film material around
the entire ~~lower edge~~lateral side portion of the moulds and
a receptacle depression is formed in the film material in the
central upper portion of the moulds which retains its
original shape during the deforming ~~prodecure~~procedure.

26. (Previously presented) The device as claimed in Claim 25,
wherein the positive or the negative mould can be
connected to a vacuum source.
27. (Previously presented) The device as claimed in Claim 25,
further comprising a heating means for heating the film
material to a controlled temperature.
28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein
the product to be packed is a food product .
29. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the flexible
material is less than 150 μM thick.
30. (New) The device of claim 25, wherein the tension applied
to the film material is applied by moveable and adjustable
clamping elements.